

A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET

Freddy, it seems is dead (although we thought he always was!) but with *Nightmare Number Six* still to show up on video we thought we'd look back at one of our old favourites and how it was third time unlucky for the *Elm Street* kids.

With Freddy making almost as many appearances on screen as the infamous Jason Vorhees, just what made the *Elm Street* movies such a hit? We reckon it's the ingenious blend of astonishing special effects, Freddy's cutting sense of humour and the terror we all feel in the middle of genuine nightmares.

Nightmare 3 was one of the best of the series, because it not only contained the last of the original *Elm Street* children whose parents fried Krueger alive in the factory ovens, it also brought back Heather Langenkamp as Nancy Thompson, the heroine of the original *A Nightmare On Elm Street*.

At the film's opening, Nancy's mum has been killed by Freddy and her father has taken to the bottle, while she has become a psychotherapist specialising in disturbing dreams. The clinic she's now assigned to is run by strict authoritarian Dr Elizabeth Sims who'd be happy to give all her patients short sharp shocks. On the plus side is Dr Neil Gordon who's sympathetic to the *Elm Street Kids'* dilemma - they're all afraid to sleep - but unable to scientifically explain it.

The teenagers themselves are a perfect mix and match. Plump Jennifer wants to be a movie star, Joey is traumatised into silence, creative sleepwalker Philip has tried to slash his wrists, Taryn escapes into drugs, fantasy-loving Will is wheelchair bound after jumping off a roof, Kincaid is a black bruiser with a serious attitude problem and Kristen draws and makes models of Freddy's evil house. Kristen, though, has the unique ability of being able to draw others into her dreams and when Freddy (as a giant

snake under the carpet) tries to gobble her up, Kristen draws Nancy in to rescue her. Nancy tries helping the patients by offering to give them a dream-suppressant drug, Hypnocil, but after a horrific battle with Krueger, during which Joey is literally tongue-lashed to the bed over a fiery pit, Dr Sims dismisses Nancy and Neil from the hospital.

Confined to their rooms, the kids have to face their own encounters with Ol' Scissorhands and this is where the effects really to go to town. Phil is led puppet-like by the veins in his arms to his death, Jennifer has an explosive debut on tv (after Freddy is seen telling Zsa Zsa Gabor on the Dick Cavett show, "Who gives a **** what you think?"), and Kristen faces lethal bath-taps and a decapitated mother.

Unexpected help comes in the shape of Freddy's mum, Sister Mary Helena, who tells Neil of the time she was trapped in the asylum with all the loonies, and Krueger was the result, he's the bastard son of a 1000 maniacs remember. The only way he can be stopped, she warns is if

his bones are laid in sacred ground. Neil persuades Nancy's less than enthusiastic father to recover the bones and re-bury them. But, Freddy's not going to let that happen without putting up a fight...

The final confrontation, in which the teenagers are transformed into their fantasy heroes - Will as a wizard, Taryn as a tough punk, Kristen as a gymnast, and Kincaid as a fighter - is brilliantly linked to the battle over the bones, with at least two surprises left for the last few minutes.

Wes Craven left the directing this time to Chuck Russell, but he provided the lively screenplay and with the powerful, driving score by Dokken, ensured that no-one would sleep well for a week after. He may be dead, but never forget:

"One, two, Freddy's coming for you
Three, four better lock your door
Five, six, grab a crucifix
Seven, eight, better stay up late
Nine, ten, never sleep again."



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